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Incarnation of our Lord 1564, on Saturday, 9th of the month of December, in the fifth year of the pontificate of our most holy father and lord in Christ, Pius IV. Pope.

A. LOMELLINUS, Custos.

## Correspondence.

### INVOCATION OF SAINTS AND ANGELS PROVEN FROM SCRIPTURE, REASON, AND ANTIQUITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—Seeing you from time to time attend to and publish the letters of Catholic correspondents in your renowned publication, I, therefore, as a Catholic, beg you will give publicity to the few following observations which I propose offering on the above subject. In order to prove the utility of the doctrine of the Invocation of Saints and Angels, I believe it is first necessary to prove that they possess some knowledge of what is passing among us here on earth; and, secondly, that they are capable of hearing our prayers; for I confess, that if either of these two attributes are wanting in them our prayers to them are but a mere loss of time. And now, Mr. Editor, as to the first of these points, you will remember that in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, Abraham is represented as knowing that the rich man's five brethren on earth had Moses and the Prophets among them—i.e., their writings. Of this fact Abraham (who was then a saint in Heaven or in Limbo) could have acquired no knowledge while on earth, as the Scriptures were unwritten in his day. If Abraham learned this in heaven, why not learn other things relative to us in the same way? And if he knew thus, why should not every other celestial saint know the same? And if the saints possess such knowledge of us, is it not evident that angels possess a far higher degree of knowledge? Also, the rich glutton in hell is said to have prayed to Abraham for his five brethren upon earth. And, surely, if a damned spirit in hell remembered his brethren on earth, and prayed for them, it reasonably follows that the saints in heaven remember their friends and brethren on earth, and pray for them; for in heaven their love is increased towards one another. Protestants must admit that the devils in hell know our thoughts and acts, and the Scriptures are clear on this point:—"The accuser of our brethren (the devil) is cast forth, who accused them before God day and night." (Apoc. xii. 10.) How could he bring accusations against us if he did not know our crimes? And if he knows our offences, he knows our thoughts; for we transgress God's law in thought as well as in deed and in word. And, surely, you will allow the spirits of the just, made perfect in heaven, more knowledge than you ascribe to the devils.

Again, the prophets, who were but mere men in frail tabernacles of flesh, knew what passed at great distances from them. For instance, Eliseus knew what passed at an enormous distance in the Syrian king's chamber. (4 Kings vi. 12.) That same prophet of God knew what passed in his absence between Naaman and Geazi. (See 4 Kings v. 26.) Also, Peter knew the sacrilegious lie of Ananias and Sapphira. Now, I am sure that these, and other like men of God, when they gave up the fleshly veils in which their spirits were enshrouded, and when they ascended up to that glorious city where they "know even as they are known," received a superior degree of knowledge than they possessed while in this world, where the most blessed and perfect know only "in part." (1 Cor. xiii. 12.) Yes, the blessed and glorious spirits in heaven see all things in God, and hence it is evident they see our actions and hear our prayers in Him, and through Him, as "It is in Him we live, move, and have our being." That the angels and saints are our guardians and protectors here below is evident from our blessed Lord's own words—"See that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father." (Mat. xviii. 10.) If we thus each have particular angels who watch over and are interested in us, I ask is it not lawful and right for us to petition them to pray to God for us? If they watch over and after us, surely they know our actions, &c. In Luke xv. 10, the Protestant version states—"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Now, repentance is a change of mind and heart; and if the angels are capable of knowing what passes in the heart and mind of a penitent sinner, surely they also know our wants, and can hear our prayers. That the same is true of the saints is evident from our blessed Lord's words, Mat. xxii. 30—"They (the saints) are as the angels of God in heaven." (See, also, Luke xx. 36.) We all must know, from sundry passages of holy writ, that the angels actually pray for us. For example, in Zech. i. 12, we are informed that an angel took an interest in and prayed for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah. If an angel thus intercedes for the above cities, and if God attend to and answer his requests, why should not they intercede for us? and why may not God attend to and answer their petitions on our behalf in one case as well as in the other? We also know the saints pray or intercede for us in heaven; for in Apoc. v. 8, we are told—"The four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having vials full of odour, which are the prayers of the saints." We are all aware that the saints in heaven do not pray for themselves, nor is there the slightest necessity of their doing so, as they are already in a state of perpetual bliss and happiness. For whom, then, are the above prayers

intended? Surely, for none else than those who badly need them—to wit, sinners here on earth. These are very strong passages, Mr. Editor. I would you could produce texts as strong and as clear in favour of infant baptism, the Trinity, and the change of the Sabbath, &c.

As a further demonstration of this important and (in our opinion) well-founded truth, I shall subjoin several examples of divers men of God who, from time to time, honoured and invoked the angels. For example: Lot went out to meet the angels, and solemnly adored with his face toward the earth. (Gen. xix., 1.) Joshua fell down flat on the ground before the angel, who said he was the Prince of the Lord. (Josh. v., 14.) The word "adore" in the above passages does not signify that worship which is due only to God; but it evidently means that degree of worship which is due to the saints, and which the Catholic Church rightly terms "dulia," that is, an inferior degree of worship. Is it not legal and right for us to do what we find done, in times gone by, by the patriarchs and prophets of God? Thus, Jacob prayed to an angel to bless his children. (Gen. xlviii., 16.) And in Osee, xii., 4, we are informed that he (Jacob) prevailed against the angel, and wept and prayed to him. Also, when Jacob prayed the angel to bless the sons of Joseph, did he not say, "Be my name, and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac called (or invoked) upon them." Surely, Jacob when he was dying would not advise his children to invoke him after death if it was not right and scriptural for them to do so. And I am sure, Mr. Editor, you will agree with me in saying, we should all try and observe the commands or advice of such a venerable and renowned man of God. Again, in Job, v. 1, we find Eliphaz exhorting Job, the afflicted servant of the Lord, in these words, "Call now, if there be any that will answer thee, and turn to some of the saints." Is not this passage clear and distinct? Does it not at once show that it was the practice of Job and of the Church in his day to pray (as Catholics now-a-days do) to saints in heaven? The Church militant on earth are members of the same mystical body of Christ with the Church triumphant in heaven. Hence it is reasonable to suppose that, as component parts of one and the same body, we care for and are interested in one another. And as our love for each other only increases when we get to heaven, of course we pray for our friends and relatives on earth to that God in whose presence we are located. And now, Mr. Editor, feeling lest I should trespass too far upon your valuable space, I shall merely add a few quotations from some of the Fathers of the primitive Christian Church. For example, Dionysius, who lived in the second century, says, "When we beseech the saints to help us we obtain very great assistance." (Eccl. Hierar. c. vii.) In the same century, St. Clement writes, "Honour the martyrs as we honour SS. James and Stephen. God hath made them blessed, and holy men have honoured them." (Apost. Const. 5.) Also, Origen, who wrote in the third century, says, "O Saints of God, I beseech you to fall down, before his (God's) mercy for me, a sinful wretch." St. Ambrose, in the fourth century, writes, "He honours Christ who honours his martyrs. We must pray to the angels, who are given to us as our defenders, and to the martyrs (or saints), who are able to pray that our sins may be blotted out." (Serm. 6, and de viduis.) I could also quote several Protestant authorities in proof of the truth of this doctrine now held and taught by Roman Catholics. Take one or two examples. Luther, the great German reformer (or rather deformer) of the sixteenth century, writes: "I, therefore, with the whole Catholic Church, hold that the saints are to be honoured and invoked by us." (In Purg. Quorand., Art. T. 1.) Also, the Augsburg Confession of Faith, Arts. 5 and 21, states that it is the doctrine of Protestants to give relative and inferior veneration to saints and angels. Thorndyke, in his Epistle, part 3, teaches the Roman Catholic doctrine with regard to the invocation of saints and angels as a truth which cannot be questioned. I could quote innumerable other passages in support of this practice, but the few above may suffice.

Yours, obediently,

AN ENQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

October 1st, 1856.

The letter which we insert above is exactly of the kind which we like to get from our Roman Catholic correspondents. It is written in a fair and temperate spirit; it is not discursive, but keeps to the point, and, instead of bewildering us with a mist of words, presents us arguments with which we can grapple. We think we shall show that some of the arguments are not conclusive, and that, even if they all were conclusive, they would come short of proving what our correspondent is bound to prove.

Our correspondent sets out by trying to prove two things: first, that saints and angels possess some knowledge of what is passing on earth; and secondly, that they are capable of hearing our prayers. With reference to this, we may remark, in the first place, that even if he succeeded in establishing these two propositions, he would have by no means done all that is necessary for his case. No doubt, if he fail there is an end of invocation of saints. If they cannot hear our prayers, to address prayers to them is an absurd waste of time, supposing it is nothing worse. But even if it were certain that they were capable of hearing our prayers, it would require some good arguments to induce us to

address our prayers to them in the absence of any encouragement from Scripture for such a practice, either in the way of precept or example, and with the knowledge that no countenance for invocation of saints is to be found in any of the authentic remains of the first three centuries.

But, secondly, it will be seen that all our correspondent's proofs are confined to the first of his two propositions. He does bring some arguments in support of the position that saints and angels have some knowledge of what takes place on earth; but he does not even attempt to prove that there is good reason for thinking that they hear the prayers addressed to them in different places.

To illustrate our meaning, suppose our correspondent made it a practice to supplicate in his bedroom every morning, "Archbishop Hughes, of New York, pray for me;" and suppose that we asked him, what reason have you to think that Archbishop Hughes is cognizant of this request of yours, would it be a sufficient answer to say that people in America are generally acquainted with what is going on in Ireland? It would not be enough to show that American newspapers indicate a general knowledge of Irish affairs; it would be necessary to show that this special request had actually come to the individual knowledge of Archbishop Hughes.

Now to apply this to the point in dispute. Supposing it were ever so certain that St. Patrick has some knowledge of the present state of things on earth—supposing, for instance, that it were proved that he knows that Ireland has become Christian, and that he knows also of the religious differences which now divide the island, still this kind of knowledge is no sufficient foundation for the doctrine of invocation of saints. We want to see it proved that if, at the same moment, Terence Flanagan in Cork says, "Holy St. Patrick, pray for the forgiveness of my sins;" and Tim Sullivan in Limerick says, "Holy St. Patrick, pray for my deliverance from toothache;" and Brian M'Evoy in Armagh says, "Holy St. Patrick, pray for something else for me;" we want to see it proved that St. Patrick is sure to know of all these individual petitions. This is exactly what never can be proved. If, indeed, God had told us to pray to St. Patrick, then we need not trouble our heads how St. Patrick was to hear, but might be satisfied that God would take care that our supplications should not be in vain; but if we pray to St. Patrick out of our own heads, without any Divine warrant, and merely as a private speculation of our own, then it is not an unreasonable question to ask, what warrant have we for believing that St. Patrick hears our prayers? or can we even know that his knowledge of earthly affairs extends so far as to know that there is such a person as Terence Flanagan or Brian M'Evoy? Having made these preliminary observations, we come to our correspondent's proofs, and we shall find it desirable to separate the questions of invocation of saints and invocation of angels.

Our correspondent might have spared himself the trouble of proving that angels are not ignorant of earthly affairs. Protestants readily acknowledge that it is the doctrine of Scripture that God constantly employs the instrumentality of angels in his dealings with mankind; that "angels are all ministering spirits, sent to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." Even this, however, is not sufficient to warrant prayer to any particular angel. Supposing it were certain that there is an angel Raphael, and that he is employed in human affairs, and, of course, that he is acquainted with those concerns in which he is employed, still, what reason should we have to think that he is omnipresent (or, at least, omnipresent as far as we are concerned)? What reason have we for being sure that he is in attendance on us, or that if we address a request to him he is certain to know of it?

But there are stronger reasons against praying to the angels than the mere uncertainty whether they can hear us. It is a remarkable fact that though the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, are full of examples of cases where angels were sent by God to accomplish his designs for the benefit of his people, there is not a single instance where any of God's people, under either the old or new dispensation, made direct application to an angel for intercession or assistance. The help of angels, as well as every other blessing, could only be procured by prayer to God himself. The only mention of prayer to angels occurs in the Epistle of the Colossians (chap. ii., 18), and there such prayers are mentioned with reprobation, as likely to withdraw us from our attachment to our head, Jesus Christ, our only Mediator. "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen; vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head." And we are informed (see Zonaras, in Canon 35 of the Council of Laodicea; Theodoret, Tom. ii., p. 355., Paris, 1642) that the Apostle had in view the heresy of certain who taught, out of a mistaken humility, that the angels had greater influence with Christ than we, and that, therefore, we ought to address ourselves to them rather than directly to Christ. The practice of prayer to angels thus pointedly condemned by St. Paul seems to have been a local one, and to have very slowly extended itself to the Church. Thus, Theodoret tells us: "Those who were zealous for the Jewish law taught

also the veneration of angels, saying that the law was given by them. And this custom remained in Phrygia and Pisidia for a long time, on which account a council assembling at Laodicea, in Phrygia, forbade by a law the offering prayers to angels. And even to the present day prayer to St. Michael is practised in that place and in the neighbouring districts."

It is hardly necessary for us to comment on the fact, that so late as the time of Theodoret, who lived in the 5th century, prayer even to Michael, the greatest of the angels, is spoken of *not* as the practice of the Church, but as the forbidden superstition of a sect of Phrygian heretics. The canon of the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 360), to which Theodoret refers, is as follows:—

"It is not right for Christians to leave the Church of God, and to depart, and to name angels, and to make separate assemblies which are forbidden. If any one, then, be found taking part in this secret idolatry, let him be anathema, for he has forsaken our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and has attached himself to idolatry."

And we cannot better sum up the views of the early Church on this subject than in the words of Origen, which we have cited in full already, p. 75:

"We confess that the angels are ministering spirits, sent to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation—that they ascend, bearing the prayers of men, to the purest heavenly regions, and that they descend thence bearing to each man according to his deserts, as God has commanded them to minister. . . . But it is not commanded us to reverence and worship instead of God those who merely minister and bear to us blessings from God. For all prayers, supplications, intercessions, and giving of thanks must be offered to God over all, through Him who is above all angels, our high priest, the living word of God."

"But it is not reasonable to call upon the angels, since we do not possess any knowledge concerning angels—a knowledge which it is above man's power to obtain. Nay, let us imagine that we did possess this wonderful and mysterious knowledge concerning angels: we should then know their nature and the functions that each is appointed to discharge; but this would not permit us to have the confidence to offer our prayers to any save to that God who is sufficient for all things through our Saviour Jesus, the Son of God, who is the Word, the Wisdom, and the Truth. And in order to obtain that the angels should be propitious to us and should do everything for us, it is sufficient if we, as far as human powers permit, imitate their frame of mind, even as they imitate God."

And our readers will recollect another passage of Origen, also cited in our pages, where he teaches that if we direct our prayers with a pure heart to God, through Christ, then the angels will pray with us *without being asked*; that if we strive to gain the favour of God the good will of the angels will follow, just as a shadow follows the substance.

These quotations are enough to prove that the fullest acknowledgment of the share that the angels have in ministering to the saints on earth is consistent with holding that it is derogatory to the exclusive mediation of Christ to seek their help or intercession by prayer addressed directly to themselves.

We come now to notice the examples given by our correspondent of men of God who honoured and invoked the angels. His first example is "Lot, who went out to meet the angels, and solemnly adored with his face to the earth."

Any one who will take the trouble to refer to the history here referred to will see that Lot intended no act of religious worship at all; for he was quite unaware that those who were approaching him *were* angels. He merely employed the form of salutation used in the East to a distinguished stranger, and his hospitality is commended by St. Paul. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels *unaware*."

We need not discuss whether Joshua, in using the same form of salutation, intended an act of religious worship or not; for the best of the fathers are agreed (for example, Justin Martyr, Eusebius, and Theodoret) that it was no created angel who appeared to Joshua, but the angel of the covenant, our blessed Lord Himself. And this angel is, in fact, called Jehovah in two or three verses afterwards (Josh. vi. 2).

Still less doubt can there be that the angel who wrestled with Jacob was no created angel; for Jacob himself says expressly, Genesis 32, 30, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

The next passage, cited by our correspondent, is

ἡ δὲ τῶν νόμων συντηροῦντες καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους σίβειν αὐτοῖς εἰρηγοῦντο διὰ τούτων λέγοντες δεδῶσθαι τὸν νόμον. ἔμεινε δὲ τοῦτο τὸ πάθος ἐν τῇ φρυγίᾳ καὶ Πισιδίᾳ μέχρι πολλοῦ οὐδὲ χάριν καὶ συναλθούσα σύνοδος ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ τῆς φρυγίας νόμον ἐκέλευε τοῖς ἀγγέλοις προσεῦχεσθαι καὶ μέχρι δὲ τῶν νῦν ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ ἁγίου Μιχαὴλ παρ' ἐκείνων καὶ τοῖς ὁμόροις ἐκείνων ἐστὶν ἰδεῖν.

οὐ δὲ χριστιανούς ἐγκαταλείπειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἀπέναι, καὶ ἀγγέλους ὀνομάζειν, καὶ συνάξεις ποιεῖν, ἅπῃ ἀπηγορεύεται. ἐν τῇ δυν' ἐνρεθῇ ταύτῃ τῇ κεκρυμμένῃ ἰδωλολατρίᾳ σχολῶν, ἔστω ἀνάθεμα, ὅτι ἐγκατέλειπε τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἰδωλόλ:τρεία προσηλάθι.

quoted with such a curious misconception of the writer's meaning, that we could not forbear laughing when we read it. Jacob, in blessing the two sons of Joseph, "Ephraim and Manasseh," says, "Let my name be named on them," and our correspondent imagines this to imply a direction that the name of Jacob should be invoked after his death by his descendants! The simple meaning of the words is, that Jacob adopts these two lads, Ephraim and Manasseh, as his own sons, and directs that they shall be called by his name—that is to say, that they shall no longer be counted as the sons of Joseph, but as the sons of Jacob.

The angel whose blessing Jacob invoked on his grandchildren was our Lord himself, as is obvious from the other names by which he is called—viz., God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk—the God which fed me all my life long unto this day" (v. 15).

The passage cited from Job is equally irrelevant, as any one may see who takes the trouble of looking at the context.

Having said so much about the invocation of angels, we need not occupy so much space about the invocation of saints. This was a practice which came much later into the Church, as it has evidently less support from reason than the other. We know that angels are employed in earthly affairs, and that God uses their agency in conferring benefits upon us. If, then, it were lawful for us to employ any other mediator than our blessed Lord, it is to the angels we should naturally address ourselves. But there is no reason to suppose that God employs the agency of departed saints in ministering to their brethren on earth. Scripture is remarkably silent as to the occupation of the saints between their death and resurrection; but if we can argue from a parable, we know that in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, the rich man is represented as requesting that Lazarus might be employed after his death in a mission of mercy to this earth, and that this request was refused. There being then no reason for supposing that our departed friends are employed at all in earthly affairs, there is far less reason in their case than in that of the angels for supposing that they are likely to hear the prayers which we address to them. And accordingly prayers to saints were much later in being introduced into the Church than prayers to angels. The first step to it arose out of the belief (as to the truth of which we need not here dispute) that the saints in heaven intercede for their friends on earth; this belief gave rise to a prayer not to the saints, but to God, that He would vouchsafe to hear and answer the intercessions so addressed to Him. Direct prayer to a saint was not made, because of the difficulty of understanding how such prayers could become known to their object; and the first example of such prayers occurred at the tombs of the martyrs. It was supposed that the spirit of the departed for some time hovered round his body, and, consequently, that he was capable of hearing the requests made by those then assembled round his tomb. But at this time it was not imagined that the same saint was capable of hearing petitions addressed to him at the same time from a number of different places. The first notions of the pluri-presence of the saints sprung out of the superstitious carrying about of relics. When the body of a saint was divided, and portions of it carried about to different places, it was not unnatural that in all these places the superstitious should suppose that the saint, a portion of whose remains they had among them, was present with them, and capable of hearing their petitions. And the notion of the possibility of a saint hearing prayers addressed to him in different places having been once introduced, it is not difficult to understand how the practice of invocation of saints, even apart from their relics, gradually became prevalent.

This is the simple historical account of the origin of invocation of saints; and there is little trouble in replying to the passages of Scripture adduced by our correspondent.

He cites cases where prophets have been supernaturally informed by God of events which took place at a distance from them, and asks whether departed saints might not have equal knowledge. Surely, no one denies the possibility that God might make such revelations to them if he thought proper; but the question is, have we any good reason to suppose that He does? There is not the slightest reason for imagining that omniscience (or, at least, knowledge of everything that takes place on earth) is an ordinary attribute of the departed. The knowledge, indeed, of what is going on on earth would often rather take from their happiness than add to it. And where is the proof that God will be certain to reveal to St. Patrick, or any other saint, that Terence Flanagan is at this moment asking his intercession?

Our correspondent tells us that the parable of Dives and Lazarus shows us that Abraham was in glory acquainted with the fact that the Jews after his death had Moses and the prophets among them. We should scarcely like to build an argument on a parable, but certainly, if we imagine that Abraham has any intercourse with those who died after him, he can scarcely be ignorant of such facts as these; but this does not in the least help us to answer the question. If I, at this moment, ask Abraham for his intercession, will he know of my request?

As for the prayers of the saints, spoken of in the Apo-

calypse, our correspondent is evidently so much in the habit of hearing the word saints applied only to a few dead Christians, that he forgets that it is the ordinary New Testament appellation of the whole body of living Christians. We cannot discuss the few references to ancient authors given by our correspondent at the close of his communication. As far as we are able to judge, he has not looked into any of the books himself; at least, the references he has given are not such as to enable us to find the passages on which he relies; and the character of the authors cited is such as not to hold out any inducement to us to spend much trouble in the search. Thus, the works of Dionysius the Areopagite, from which his first quotation professes to be taken, are known by all scholars not to have been written by that saint, but to have been the forgery of a much later age; and it is equally certain that the Apostolic Constitutions, cited in the second place, were not written by St. Clement. Can our correspondent bring us any proof of invocation of saints from a writer of the first three centuries?

## ON THE SUPREMACY OF ST. PETER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you an epistle, and proved the supremacy of St. Peter, the first pope and visible head of the Catholic Church, from clear texts of Scripture taken out of the Holy Bible. I sincerely thank you, sir, for giving me a fair hearing, and I am glad that you have given the Catholics another example of fair play. I agree with Mr. Rourke concerning the goodness of the CATHOLIC LAYMAN. Protestants are not acquainted with the Catholic doctrine, and they can't comprehend it without an explanation. I would like to hear both sides of the question, says a talented Protestant neighbour to me the other day. I regret my utter inability to give adequate expression to the varied feelings that at this moment occupy my mind. I defy libel and treason, because I am willing to use moderation if censure is deserved, and to act in accordance with the dictates of Christian charity, which embraces within its wide range the uttermost bounds of the earth, and all the members of the human family. It was exclusively the supremacy of St. Peter I was proving, and the command he received from God-man to feed his lambs and sheep, both pastors and people. In that sense the omission I committed was of no importance, because it was not the matter and form of the sacrament of baptism I was proving. Why do you call the Church Roman? Because the visible head of the Church is Bishop of Rome; and because St. Peter and his successors fixed their see in Rome. Who is the visible head of the Church? The Pope, who is Christ's vicar on earth, and supreme visible head of the Church. To whom does the Pope succeed as visible head of the Church? To St. Peter, who was chief of the Apostles Christ's vicar on earth, and first Pope and Bishop of Rome. When was St. Peter made Pope, or head of the Church? Chiefly when Christ said to him: Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven! Feed my lambs, feed my sheep—Matth. xvi., John xxi. What do these texts of Scripture prove? That Christ committed to St. Peter, and to his lawful successors, the care of his whole flock, that is, of his whole Church, both pastors and people. Christ prayed for St. Peter that his faith should not fail him, and left him to confirm his brethren. When Christ foretold that scandals would rise, and that there would be tares in the wheat, he said the faith of Peter would never fail. The Roman Catholic Church has received her beginning, her doctrine, her orders, and her mission from Christ and his Apostles, and has brought the same down, pure and without any corruption, to the present day. That the Roman Catholic religion had its beginning from Christ and his Apostles we can easily prove, by counting up, through every age, a regular succession of pastors. In the fourth century, St. Optatus, speaking of the see of Rome, says, that "In this one chair sat Peter first; to him succeeded Linus; to him Cletus, and Clement, and the rest, down to Siricius, the present pontiff, with whom we and all the world hold communion. And now," he adds, "do you give an account of your sees—you that pretend to call yourselves the Catholic Church." If the saint could say all this, when he could number only thirty-nine popes, with how much more reason can a Roman Catholic in these days, when he can count (on the long list of popes, from St. Peter down to the present pope, Leo XII., both included) 253, exclaim, "Let the Protestants show us anything like this? Let them show us the lists of their bishops, succeeding to each other in a regular order, from the days of [the Apostles down to the present day! Come, this is that rock, over which the proud gates of hell can never prevail. Come, for in this Church alone you will find the greatest security, peace, and comfort for every sad and dejected soul." St. John was one of the sheep, and did not speak against the shepherd and his successors. The holy fathers gave all glory to God, and in preaching the word of God, they told their flocks that the first visible head of the Church of Christ was formerly a poor fisherman, and that it was Andrew first followed Christ, and that it was not Andrew received the primacy; only Peter. As the form of government established by Christ in his